

LITTLE METZU

THE JAPANESE BOY



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CHILDREN OF THE WORLD SERIES

STORY OF
LITTLE METZU
THE JAPANESE BOY

BY
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JAPANESE CHILDREN

STORY OF LITTLE METZU

THE JAPANESE BOY

Away in the western part of our land, along the shores of the great Pacific Ocean, lies the State of California, and in the western part of this State, built around a beautiful bay, is the city of San Francisco.

Upon the waters of this bay, float the ships of all nations. If you were to go on board one of the great ships waiting at the docks for its cargo of wheat, wine, wool, silver, and gold, then sail out through the Golden Gate, upon the blue, shining waves of the Pacific, following the setting sun for four long weeks, and travel ever and ever so far, straight westward,

you would come at last to a strange, beautiful country.

If you could see the whole of this strange country at one glance, you would think it looked like a long string of beads, with one great bead in the center, then smaller ones upon each side, and just a tiny bead at each end of the string.

For this country is made up of islands — one long, narrow island in the center, then two smaller ones at each end of this long one, and about four thousand little islands — some of them so very small they seem but a black dot upon the map, or like a mere handful of trees and flowers lying upon the waters of the great ocean.

This great string of island beads is more than two thousand miles long, and, though it lies nearly five thousand miles away from San

Francisco, yet from the little Aleutian Islands farthest west, which belong to our country, it is but a short distance to the tiny Kurile Islands, at the northern end of this strange country.

So, in this way, we are really quite near neighbors. The waves of the great Pacific Ocean wash the eastern shores of this Island Empire, which we call Japan; and upon the western side are the Yellow Sea, the Japan Sea, and the Okhotsk Sea; then, still farther west, beyond the seas, lies the great country of Asia.

If you could stand upon the wharf at San Francisco, and, looking far away across the blue ocean, could see these islands, you might call them the "Land of the Setting Sun"; but the strange little people who live upon these islands call their country the "Land of the

Rising Sun"; for before the sun's rays can reach the eastern continent, they must shine upon this strange little island kingdom.

All along the eastern shores of these islands flows a current, or stream, of warm water.



GENERAL VIEW OF YOKAHAMA

This water is warmed by the hot sunshine at the equator, and the people of Japan call the stream Kuro Shina.

Its soft waves bathe the island shores, and

lovely tropical fruits and flowers spring up along its path. Then it crosses the northern part of the Pacific Ocean and warms the western shores of our own beautiful country, making even the bleak, cold shores of Alaska warmer and brighter.

In this way, all the useful and beautiful things of earth pass from one land to another, making them happier and better.

The ships sailing from San Francisco to Japan anchor in Bay of Yeddo, and the city of Yokohama lies around the bay. Eighteen miles from this city is the great city of Tokio, the capital of the Land of the Rising Sun.

In a pretty house, built almost entirely of bamboo — which is a kind of cane growing more than sixty feet high, and very large and strong — lives a merchant, who has a great warehouse in Yokohama, from which rice,

silks, and curious Japanese wooden-ware are shipped to other lands.

Little Metzu does not call his native land Japan; his name for the beautiful country is Dai Nippon, which means "The Great Sunrise Land."

You would think it a strange house for a wealthy merchant to live in, for there are but few rooms, and it is only one story high; but little Metzu — the merchant's son — and his sister Kine, think it the pleasantest place in the whole town.

Perhaps that is because it is their home, and because there are so many nice places in which to play, and so many other little children living near to play with them.

They think their city the finest in the kingdom. It is on the largest island in the center of the empire. This island is called Hondo

now, but some years ago it was called Nippon.

Back of the house where little Metzu lives, is a beautiful garden and lawn. There are



GARDENS IN TOKIO

little ponds of water where gold-fish swim; there are pretty bridges across the water; beds of bright flowers are everywhere, and from the garden wall one can look across the great

moat, where the white swans are slowly floating upon the water, and see the great stone walls of a castle — stones so large and heavy that one wonders how they were ever placed there.

Out in the garden Metzu has a pet monkey chained to a post, and the crows in the garden are so tame they will fly down beside the children, as if they wished to join in the play. Sometimes Metzu and Kine have a tea-party in the garden and make believe drink tea out of Kine's tea-set.

Then the crows will fly around crying "caw! caw!" just as they do in our own land; but these crows are so tame that they will sometimes snatch a piece of rice cake from the little table, or from the children's hands.

Then Kine has a pet kitten, with a tail about an inch long; and Metzu has a pet dog, *chin*;

that is the Japanese word for dog. The dog has a pug nose and great round eyes, and the children are very fond of him.

The children of Japan never throw stones at stray dogs, or harm them in any way. A few years ago dogs were considered sacred by the people of Japan, and there were men to look after them and see that they were fed and had shelter. Then little children used to stop on their way to school, or ceased their play, to comb and brush any stray dog they might chance to meet.

But since the Japanese have learned the ways of other people, many of their strange customs have been changed.

The little Japanese are the happiest children in the world. Everybody is kind to them and tries to please them. Perhaps that is because they are always kind and polite to everybody.



METZU'S MOTHER GOING VISITING

If you were to go out in the streets of Tokio, or of any large city in Japan, or out in the country with the farmer's children, and play with the little boys and girls, you would never hear one cross or angry word.

The little boys never strike and kick and call each other names, nor do the little girls quarrel over their queer doll babies and their pretty fans and parasols.

The babies of Japan never cry. They are always carried on the backs of their mothers or sisters, and the little girls run around playing hop scotch and blindman's buff, with a little baby brother or sister on their backs. Baby's bright eyes, shining like black beads, watch all the sport; and when it gets tired it just shuts its eyes and goes to sleep, and the poor little head wobbles and bobs around.

The ladies of Japan always carry their



A SHOEMAKER IN JAPAN

fans and parasols, when they go to visit one another.

The mothers take their children with them; and so good are they that they never make any trouble.

Little Metzu and his sister wear very funny clothes, and one wonders how they can play with such long dresses on. Then the sleeves are so wide and long; but inside of them are great pockets, and little Metzu needs pockets as much as an American boy does, and he finds as many strange things to put in them.

Kine wears a broad sash around her waist, tied in a great bow behind. Both children wear wooden shoes, bought at one of the shops in Tokio.

When the children come into the house, they slip off their shoes at the door; there is nothing to hold them on their feet except a



MEETING OF THE FOXES AT NIGHT TIME

strap over the great toe. Their stockings have a place knit for the big toe, just as your mittens have a place knit for the thumb.

Metzu and his sister, Kine, have a little pocket made of red crape, embroidered with white flowers, fastened to their sashes. Inside this pocket, which they call a prayer bag, they have a piece of paper, on which the priest has written a prayer.

Their parents believe this will guard their children from evil spirits, from foxes and all other dangers. The Japanese are afraid of foxes. They believe a fox can enchant people; and one of their pictures shows the foxes having a meeting to plan mischief and harm.

When little Metzu and Kine start for school in the morning they carry their books tied up in a large piece of crape; their paper umbrellas they carry also. When they reach the door of



A JAPANESE SCHOOL IN THE COUNTRY

the school-room, they slip their toes from their wooden shoes before they enter.

Their soft, white socks make no noise on the clean, thick mats.

In many schools in Japan the children sit down upon the floor to study their lessons. When they recite, they shout at the top of their voices in a queer sing-song way. When the teacher commences the lesson, he bows to the scholars, and they bow also ; every one bows, too, when entering or leaving the school-room.

The children seldom need punishment in school. The only mischief these children seem to do, is to slyly pull the kitten's short tail or put a paper cap on its head.

One little girl has fallen asleep with her head upon her book ; perhaps that is Kine. A little boy, sitting behind the reading class, is

writing on his desk with his paint brush. All their writing is done with a brush ; they never use a pen.

In the afternoon Metzu goes to the English school, and here he sits in a chair at a desk just as you do. Perhaps when little Metzu gets older he will come to our country and attend school here, for there are many Japanese students in our colleges.

When school is out the children play in the parks and gardens until evening. The boys wrestle and run races ; they spin their tops, and fly kites — such gay kites ! Some of them are like snakes and dragons.

Sometimes the boys have fighting kites. These are made by dipping the strings for a length of about thirty feet from the kites into glue, then into pounded glass. One boy will try to get his kite across another's in such a way

that the pounded glass will cut the string of one. The boy whose kite-string is cut must give up his kite, but these Japanese boys never seem to get angry or quarrel over their games.

The girls roll hoops, run races, drive paper butterflies through the air with their fans, and sometimes play ball with the boys. Another game, or play, which they enjoy very much, is played with masks. Some of the masks are like the faces of animals; others like those of giants and ogres. The children put these on and try to act like the animal or person the mask represents. Often they play driving away the fox. One wears a mask like the face of a fox while others pound a drum and shout to frighten him away.

In warm weather—and it is warm weather most of the time on the island of Hondo—the



RAIN COATS MADE OF GRASS

children go barefoot ; and, as do most children, they like this way best.

Metzu never has to hunt for his cap or hat when leaving for school, for he never wears one ; but sometimes when the sun shines very strong, he carries a paper umbrella. Farmers, working out of doors in a storm, wear rain coats and hats made of a kind of grass.

When Metzu and Kine go home, they leave their shoes outside the door ; then they wash their hands, faces and feet. The Japanese are a very neat, clean people, and besides taking a bath every day, they wash their feet as often as you do your hands. This keeps the mats upon the floor clean, which is quite necessary, as they always sit and sleep upon the floor.

Some one said once, "The Japanese children never fall out of bed, for there are no

beds, and never tip over a chair for there are no chairs." The matting upon the floor, and the pictures upon the walls, are nearly all the furniture a Japanese house contains.



Their dining table is very low, only a few inches high.

They sit upon the floor around this table, and the maid brings in the rice, or fish, upon

porcelain dishes. Often each dish is set upon a little stand of beautiful lacquered wood.

If you were ever so tired you would find it quite hard to rest in a Japanese bed; but Metzu and Kine think the beds they have seen in the houses of the English and American



people at Yokohama must be strange places to sleep in.

When they are tired and sleepy, they spread down upon the floor an extra mat, then they bring their pillows — wooden blocks with a

paper cushion on top — and, wrapping a thick quilt of beautifully flowered silk around them, they lie down, and sleep as sweetly as you do upon your little bed with its soft mattress and pillows.

Sometimes in the evening the father and mother sit down upon the floor with the children, and play a game very much like your game of dominoes. Japanese parents are very fond of their children, and teach them many quiet games.

They often read to the children, and tell them stories and legends of olden days.

To-day Metzu is rather sad. He has been coaxing his father to let him go fishing down by the river. He saw some little boys there yesterday catching crabs and little fishes, and he wishes to go with some of his schoolmates to-morrow and catch crabs, too. Then he has



· a new fishing rod and line, and he is sure he could catch fish with that. He saw a fisherman standing on a rock fishing with hook and line, while a great stork stood patiently beside him, hoping to share his good luck.

But Metzu's father thinks him too young to go fishing without some older person with him; and he tells him to wait a few days, and they will go to Yokohama. There he will take him out upon a bay to catch fish by torch-light.

Little Metzu is pleased with this plan. He has often been out upon the bay, but never at night, and he remembers how beautiful the water looks by moonlight.

"O father," he says, "may Kine go too?"

"Perhaps Kine does not wish to go," said his father.

But Kine's little black eyes shine brighter than ever as she nods her head, and all the funny little tufts of hair bob up and down.

"I should like to go with Metzu," she says; but she does not tease nor pout; a little Japanese girl would not do that.

Often, after school, Metzu and Kine go

through the streets of Tokio, and stop at the shops to buy candies and toys, just as you do. Their shops are small, and there are no doors ; but the whole front of the house is taken down, and you can look right through the house into the garden.

All the rooms inside the house are made by moving screens out into the large room ; and in this way they divide their houses into as many rooms as they wish.

Every morning the screens are folded and set away, the matting is swept, the walls and pictures dusted, and then the housework is finished.

The wooden pillows and thick silk quilts are laid away in a chest of lacquered wood. Two or three pictures, a spray of flowers in a vase, a guitar, or *samosen*, and a table a few inches high, is all the furniture a Japanese housekeeper has in her rooms.

As the children pass along the street, they stop to watch some men carving a statue of Buddha, one of their gods. In another shop they are carving ivory toys — balls, curious eggs, one inside another, the last one so small that you can scarcely see it. Then there are little acrobats and tumblers, and many, many other strange toys, carved from bone and ivory, and painted with bright colors.

Each little house is a workshop, and you will see the men and women making fans, polishing mirrors, carding cotton, making bonnets and silk and paper flowers.

One morning, Metzu's father said to the little boy, "To-day you may go to Yokohama with me. You may go fishing by torch-light, and perhaps we will go to Osaka by water and come home by the city of Kioto."

"And may Kine go, too?" cried little Metzu, clapping his hands with delight.

"Kine and mother, also," said his father; "and we will visit your grandmother in Kioto."



FISHING BY MOONLIGHT

Away ran little Metzu to tell his sister the good news; and soon the two children were talking merrily together, planning what they would do and wondering what they would see upon this pleasure trip.

Soon they reach the station, and, after passing through their own city, which is about twenty miles long, they soon see the blue waters of the bay shining in the morning sunlight; for it is only eighteen miles from Tokio to Yokohama.

Metzu goes with his father down along the wharves where the great ships lie at anchor; and how he longs to visit the far-away lands from which they came! Then they go to the great warehouses, where goods of different kinds are stored, ready to be shipped away to other countries. In some of the houses, goods that the ships have brought to Japan are also being stored, ready to supply the merchants of other towns.

Kine and her mother go to visit some friends, and later, when Metzu and his father come to the house, they all have tea together.

While their guests are drinking tea, the ladies of the household will often play upon their curious guitars, which they call *samosens*,



AN ORCHESTRA

and of which they have several kinds. Kine has learned to play upon one of the smaller ones, and she also has learned to dance. Such

strange dancing, you would say; for she moves her body and arms, but never her feet.

At night, Metzu and his father go out upon the bay in a fisherman's boat. The light from the torches shines far over the water, and when the fish come up to see what the strange light means, the men dip them up from the water in a great net.

In the fish markets of Japan are found nearly all the fishes which we have in our own country, besides many others we never see. Two kinds of fish found in the waters of Japan are called *bonito* and *tai*; and no one would think of asking friends to a fine dinner without setting before them a dish of one of his favorite fishes. These fish are of a bright pink color, and look very nice when served on a pretty Japanese platter.

Long before the boat goes back with its

load of fish, little Metzu falls asleep, and his father carries him ashore; but he wakes up bright enough the next morning and tells Kine all about the fishes, and the beautiful bay, with its queer boats, and the great ships anchored in the harbor.

In a few days they all went on board a Japanese boat — a junk, or *sampan*, as they are called — and very queer looking boats you would think them, so different are they from any American boat.

As the boat sails southward along the island coast, the children's father tells them that, many, many years ago, Kamakura, near Yokohama, was the capital of Japan; but a great tidal wave swept over the plain for many miles, and nothing was left to show that a city had ever stood upon that plain, except a great bronze statue of their god, Buddha.

This statue, more than sixty feet high, is still standing where it was placed so many years ago; but the people who once worshipped at its altars were swept out into the great ocean by the terrible wave.



STATUE OF BUDDHA

Although the people of Japan knew nothing of other lands, and had never seen the beautiful pictures and statues in the great cities of the

world when this great statue of Buddha was made, yet, when compared with the work of other nations, it loses nothing in its simple grandeur and beauty.



FUJI-YAMA

For many miles along the coast the children watched their beautiful, sacred mountain, Fuji-yama. The Japanese people are very proud of their beautiful mountain. Standing alone, with

no mountains near it, it is as grand and beautiful, if not quite so lofty, as the great mountains of Switzerland.

The children can scarcely believe their grand Fuji-yama is sixty miles from the coast, it seems so near them, with its snow-capped summit glistening in the morning sunlight. They have always lived in sight of it, and there is a picture of it on nearly every screen, vase or fan in their home; for the Japanese believe that a picture of their sacred mountain brings good fortune to them.

Kine often repeats this little verse :

“To palace of the Emperor,
To hut of mountaineer,
The image of our Fuji San,
Brings comfort and good cheer.”

Their father once made a trip to the top of this mountain, twelve thousand five hundred

feet above the level of the great ocean. He often tells the children of this journey; of the strange pilgrims he passed, who were going to the top of the mountain to worship in the little temple kept by the priests.

These pilgrims carry long staffs in their hands to help them climb the steep pathway, and they wear straw hats shaped like great bowls, which protect them from the sun and rain.

He tells them of the beautiful view from the mountain top, when the mists roll away from the valleys below in the early morning.

Away in the east is the blue Pacific, with its beautiful bays and winding coast; to the west, shining pink and white in the morning sun, are the lofty peaks of the mountains of Central Japan — the long mountain chain that divides the island of Hondo into almost equal parts ;

curling upward into the sunlight is the smoke from many volcanoes. To the south stretches the beautiful Inland Sea; seeming almost beneath their feet, lies the lovely lake Hakone, the largest, most beautiful lake in Japan; and then over all, arch the warm, sunny skies.

But with all its beauty and grandeur, Fujiyama is sometimes a dangerous neighbor. Not many years ago it was the most active volcano in Japan; and many times fire has burst forth from its summit, and the lava and ashes have swept away fields and forests, and destroyed many lives.

In the year 1804, there was one of these eruptions. Great columns of fire shot upward, loud thunder and blinding flashes of lightning followed, and earthquake shocks were felt for ten days; then suddenly and with a terrible explosion, the lower part of the

mountain burst open, and for nearly one hundred miles around, the land was covered with ashes, cinders and molten lava.

Now the fire in the heart of old Fuji-yama is supposed to be extinct, and people travel safely up and down its rough, rocky sides; yet some day it may burst forth again, without warning, and bring death and destruction to all the country around it.

Japan might well be called "The Land of Many Earthquakes," for by them, these beautiful islands are often severely shaken. And that is why the houses are built so low. Metzu and Kine would tell you that they do not dare to live in a house of brick or stone; for almost any day it might be shaken down over their heads; and the frail houses of bamboo and paper would not hurt those who were living in them, as brick and stone or heavy wood might do.



A JAPANESE LADY

As the boat passes along the coast, the children love to watch the birds that live upon the water and along its shores.

Wild ducks and geese swim among the reeds, and out upon the blue water the white swan floats. The stork and white heron watch the passing boats from some safe perch, the sea-eagles and fish-eagles soar high above their heads, and among the rocky cliffs along the shore, the noisy gulls and seamews waken the echoes with their harsh-sounding screams.

When the city of Osaka can be seen in the distance, the children dance with delight. Like all little children, they dearly love to visit their grandmother. Such tiny little cups, with pictures of queer birds and bridges painted on them, they will have in which to drink their tea!

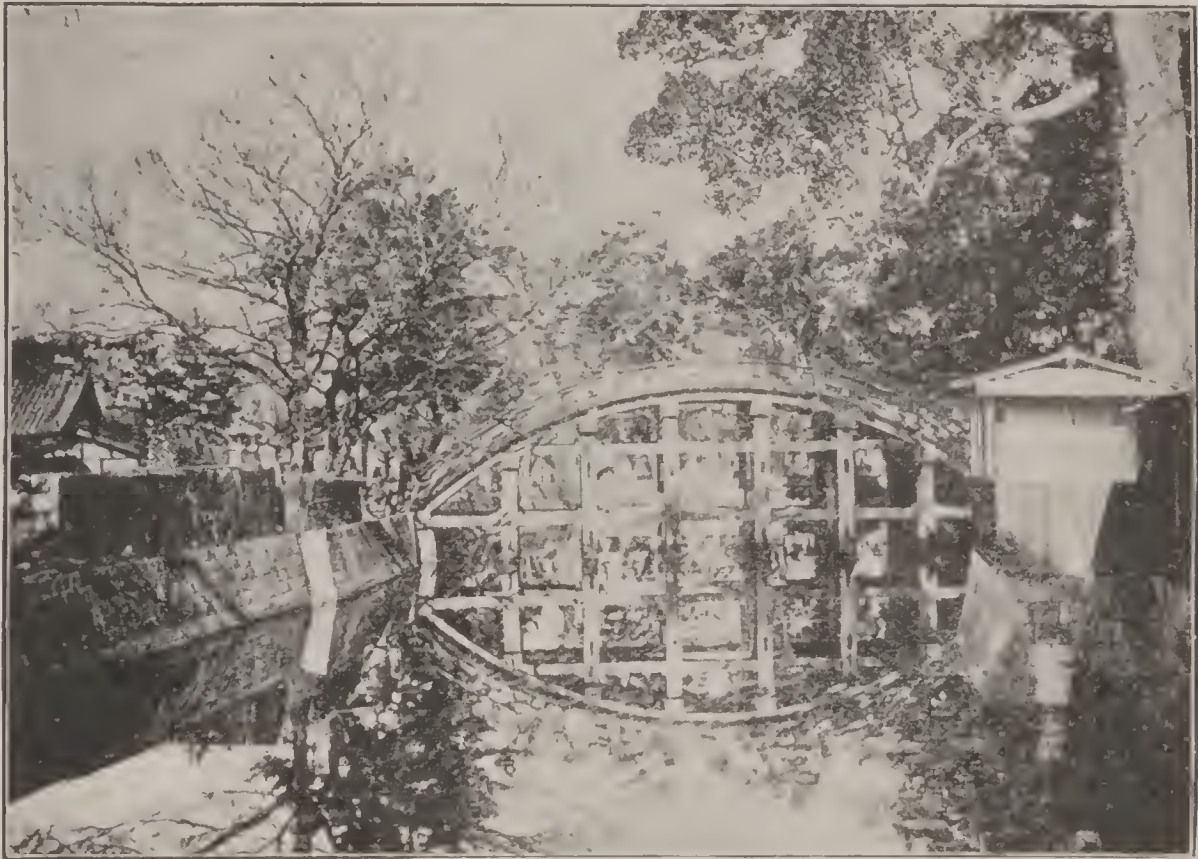
And grandmother always gives them rice

cakes on such pretty little blue and white plates ! On each plate is a picture of a palace, an orange tree with great oranges upon it, a bridge and a boat, and a pair of birds flying over them all. Rice cakes are much nicer when eaten from these pretty plates, that grandmother had when she was young.

Then these children think Osaka the most beautiful place in which to play. There are three rivers and a great many canals ; these canals are used instead of streets. There are no carriages on these water streets ; all the riding is done in junks and *sampans*, and it is great fun to lunch on board a floating tea-house.

Would you not have a grand time if you were to go into a restaurant for luncheon or to eat ice-cream, and all the time you were eating you were floating down a blue, sparkling river?

And if, instead of taking the street car or a carriage, you could ride on a queer boat, gay with flowers and flags, and lighted in the evening by paper lanterns?



DRUM BRIDGE, OSAKA

That is the way Metzu and Kine travel when they visit Osaka. There are over four hundred bridges in Osaka, and some of them are very beautiful.

The children like to visit the paper mills in this city; and they buy handkerchiefs, umbrellas, and many other things that we would never think of making out of paper. Our paper is made from rags, straw, and wood, but the Japanese make their paper from the thick bark of the Kaji tree. This paper is very tough and strong. Little Metzu's paper handkerchiefs will not tear any easier than your cambric ones; and they are so very cheap that, if he loses one sometimes, his mother will not scold.

A great many tooth-brushes are made in Osaka. Nearly all the tooth-brushes sold in our country come from that far-away city; and most of them have the word "Osaka" marked in Japanese letters upon the handle. Look at your tooth-brush; perhaps you will find "Osaka" upon it. Then just think of the long journey it has taken before it reached you!

Near Osaka is the seaport town of Kobe. This town was once called Nioga, but a few years ago the name was changed.



GENERAL VIEW OF KOBE

From Kobe, most of the tea which is raised in the southern part of Hondo is shipped to other countries. Americans use more Japanese tea than any other nation. Most of the countries of Europe use tea from China.

The factories, or warehouses, where the tea is packed into chests and stored, ready for shipment, are called "go-downs." Metzu often visits these "go-downs" with his father, and he will play around the wharves with the little boys, and make believe he is selling tea, or loading the great ships that are to carry the queer chests and jars to every part of the world.

Kine has a fine time playing with the funny dolls her grandmother had when she was a little girl. Some day they will belong to Kine, for the little girls of Japan are very careful of their dolls. Once, each year, every little girl gathers all her dolls together—all her old ones and new ones, some of them are very old—and with them she keeps the Feast of Dolls.

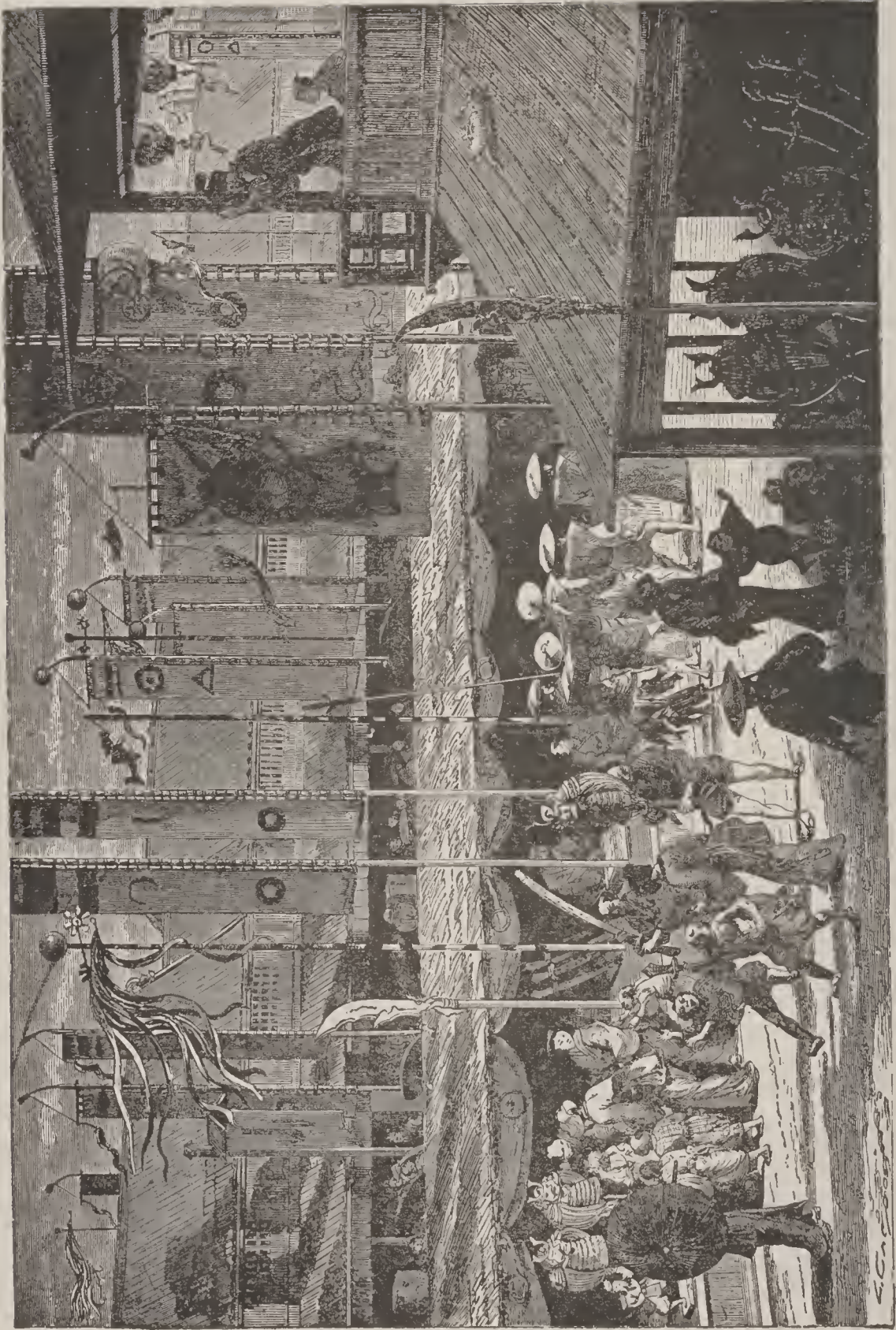
The little girls have a nice dinner, and a

merry time playing with their friends and talking about their dolls. Every girl gets a new dolly on that day. Even the children of the very poorest have a new doll in honor of the day.

Of course little Metzu does not care much for the Feast of Dolls. Little boys have a feast day of their own, and he thinks that day is more interesting than Dolls' Day.

The boys' day is the Feast of Banners, and it comes about the first of May. In front of every house tall poles are set up, with flags and banners, and streamers of bright colors flying from them.

Many of the flags are shaped like fishes. These are made of paper and are hollow. When the wind blows into them, they fill out and look very much like a fish fastened to a line in the water.



FEAST OF BANNERS

The fish which these flags represent is the carp. This fish is chosen because it is a very strong, brave fish. It will swim against a rapid current, or leap over waterfalls, and Japanese parents wish their boys to be brave and strong, and ready to overcome difficulties, as does the carp.

Leaving Kine and her mother to visit with grandmother, Metzu's father took him another journey. This time it was on a great steamer, which had brought a cargo to Japan, and was now taking a cargo of tea and Japanese silks and porcelain back to the country from which it came. But before sailing away across the great ocean, this steamer must take on board coal enough to last until she reaches home; and it takes a great many tons of coal to last many days in the furnaces of the great ocean steamers.

Now the steamers are going to the city of Nagasaki, which is on the island of Kiusiu, to take in coal for her trip across the ocean.

Metzu had never seen this part of his native land. He had never before been off the island of Hondo; and he was delighted with this idea. So, one morning, the great boat slowly turned from the wharf at Kobe and steamed away down the Inland Sea.

All day long they sailed through the beautiful sea, passing whole fleets of Japanese fishing boats and junks loaded with goods to be exchanged for coal at Nagasaki.

The Inland Sea is over two hundred miles long, but in no place is it very wide; and it looks more like a great lake, with mountains, forests, cities and towns lying along its shores.

At last they reach the island of Kiusiu, and enter the harbor of Nagasaki. This is one of

the finest harbors in the world, and the city looks very beautiful as they come in sight of it, for it is built upon the hillside, and seems to extend from the edge of the water to the great mountains beyond ; and in the heart of these mountains are the great coal mines, from which five hundred thousand tons of coal are taken every year.

Near the wharf where the great steamer came for coal, Metzu saw the docks where ships from other countries are repaired.

Taking passage on another steamer that was bound for Kobe, Metzu and his father were soon sailing back over the Inland Sea, passing on the way the island of Shikoku, the smallest of the four large islands of Japan.

Another island that Metzu wishes to visit, and which is many miles from Hondo, is the island of Formosa.

This island once belonged to China; and Metzu never tires of hearing his father tell, how, in 1894, the Chinese broke their treaty with Japan, which caused war at once.

The Chinese have a much larger country and many more soldiers than Japan; but they were not so brave and strong as the Japanese, and they were too indolent and proud to improve their army, as Japan had done.

After several battles, which the Japanese always won, the Chinese were glad to ask for peace; and on April 17, 1895, a new treaty was signed, in which China promised to give Japan about one hundred and seventy million dollars, and also the island of Formosa.

Metzu is very proud of his brave little country, and thinks that if he had been a man, he would have taken the whole of China.

Though the Japanese are so gentle and

obliging in their own land and among themselves, they can be brave and bold in defense of their rights.



TEMPLE, OSAKA

One day the children visited the Moon Temple, which is built on the summit of a steep mountain near Kobe, and which is

reached by climbing many hundred steps cut in the rock.

The view from the Temple is very beautiful, looking away over the town to the waters of the sea.

Then the children visited the Temple of Tennoji, near Osaka, and placed some pretty toys upon the children's shrine, as offerings to their god. These little children are Buddhists in their religion.

The Japanese are not a Christian people, although many of them believe in the Christian religion; still, most of the people of Japan worship Buddha or Confucius, or believe in the Shinto religion.

There are a great many temples and shrines in Japan. There are many priests, pilgrims and hermits. Often little shrines are built by the wayside, and people passing along stop to pray.

In front of every shrine there is placed a gong, with a great rope hanging near it. Every pilgrim strikes the gong to let the gods know he is about to say his prayers.



There was one street in Osaka where the children never tired of walking; here was the public library and nearly a mile of book shops.

Metzu and Kine are very fond of books, and they both bought one.

Metzu bought a book of stories about monkeys. All boys like to read about monkeys, and the

picture on Metzu's book looks as if it might be that of a very mischievous monkey.



JINRIKISHA, NATIVE CARRIAGE

The Japanese are very fond of pictures, and all their books are picture books; but some of the pictures would look very strange to American children.

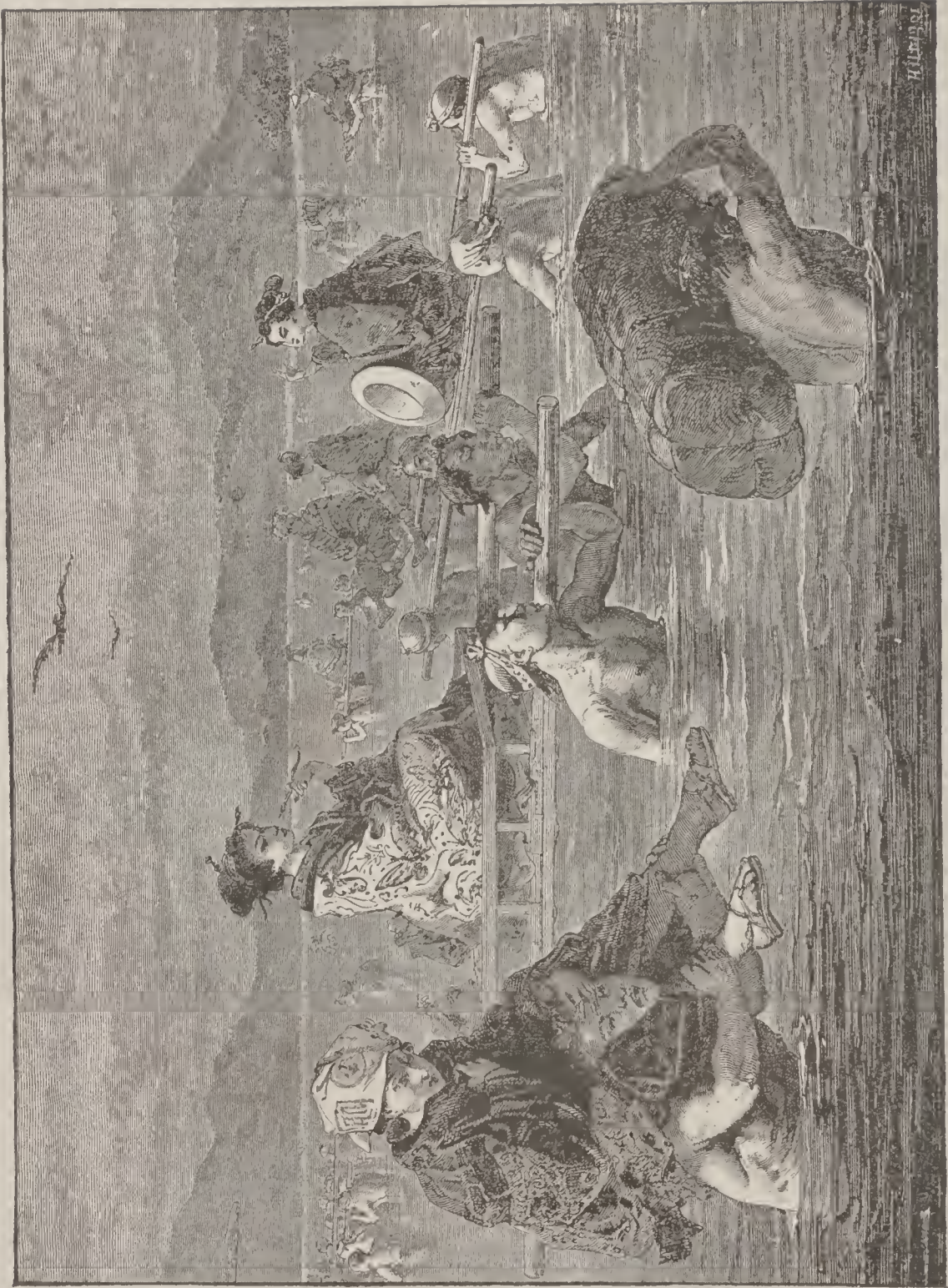
From Osaka the children and their parents are going to Kioto, about thirty miles inland.

There is a railroad from Osaka to Kioto, but the children think it much pleasanter to ride in a *jinnrikisha*. This is a queer carriage, which looks like a grown-up baby carriage, and it is drawn by men, instead of horses.

These men can travel very fast, often going five or six miles an hour for several hours; but it is very hard work, and many of them die of heart disease.

Sometimes ladies ride about the town in a *norimon* or *Kago*. This is a kind of basket chair, hung to a long pole, and is carried on the shoulders of men.

These ingenious people have another curious custom. When there is no bridge across a stream, people and goods are carried across on



CROSSING A RIVER

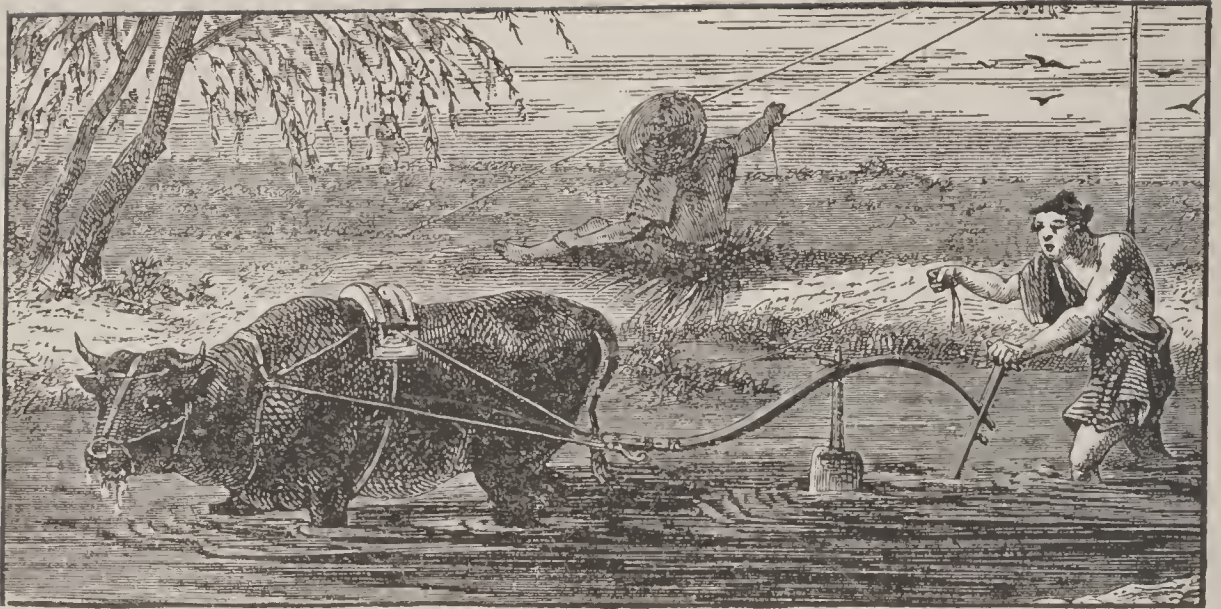
the shoulders of men who wade, or swim when the water is deep.

Rich people are carried in a covered conveyance, carried on the shoulders of several men, but the poorer people must trust themselves to the shoulders of one man.

The road from Osaka to Kioto is built upon the top of the dike or embankment that keeps the river Ogana from overflowing the land. The children saw many things which amused and interested them as they rode along.

The low lands along the rivers are great rice fields, and at intervals along the embankment are sluices, or gateways, to let the water run out of the river over the rice fields. Then the earth is plowed or stirred up until it is soft mud, and in this mud the young rice plants are set in even rows.

The people work in mud and water up to



PLOWING RICE GROUND



TRANSPLANTING RICE

their knees, and women and children help set the young plants in the ground.

The rice harvest is a very important one to the Japanese farmer; for without rice his family would scarcely be able to live. Rice in Japan is what wheat is in our country, and an American family could not live very well without bread.

Rice is ground in a mill turned by hand, and a piece of rice cake makes as good a lunch for Metzu as a piece of good bread and butter does for the little American boy.

All along the way the children see groves of lacquer trees. From the sap of these trees a beautiful varnish is made. In no other country can you find such beautiful, polished woodwork as you find here, and no other people have the patience required to make such perfect work.



HAIR DRESSING

The sap of the tree is colored upon copper plates ; then the wood is varnished and rubbed with soft stone ; then varnished again and again, until the wonderful smoothness and polish is obtained.

Years ago, when lacquer trees became very scarce in the island, every farmer upon the island was obliged to plant a certain number of these trees ; and now there are again a great many of them. Kine and Metzu have little boxes of lacquered ware in which are kept gold and silver cord to tie up their hair. Kine has red paint and gilt in her box ; for each morning she paints her under lip red and puts a little gilt in the center of it.

Metzu's mother has very pink cheeks and very red lips ; and she wears great gilt hair-pins in her hair. The children think she is very beautiful.

It seems to be natural for little children of all nations to think their mother the prettiest and best in the world.

All along the eastern hillsides are the tea-farms of Japan. The ground is carefully cultivated. No trees grow near to keep the warm rays of the sun from the ground, and no houses are built near tea-fields; for everything must be clean and sweet around the tea-plants, or the fresh young leaves will lose their fine flavor.

From the mountain streams pure water is brought to the plants, and they must be carefully cultivated for five years before any tea-leaves can be gathered from them.

Then the women and children help to pick and sort out the leaves: the youngest leaves make the finest tea.

No more leaves are gathered than can be

dried before night. There are two ways of drying tea-leaves—one in a pan over a fire, the other by steaming the leaves until they are wilted; but whichever way it is done, the leaves are rolled in the hands of the women until nearly dry.

The steamed leaves make a green tea, and those dried in an open pan are yellow.

The finest teas are packed in jars, and the coarser grades in boxes covered with matting.

The city of Kioto is very beautiful, and Metzu finds a great many things to interest him.

He goes with Kine and his mother to the silk factories; for in Kioto the most beautiful of Japan's silks are made.

Everywhere grows the mulberry tree, which feeds the wonderful silk-worms—"Mother Nature's queer little spinners"—and nearly every house is a silk factory.

Kioto has no large factories where thousands of busy looms are tended by men and women, just as busy. There is no jar of machinery, no whirring spindles and whirling wheels, no "swish" of steam or screaming of whistles, telling that work has begun.

In each little house the man sits patiently before his loom, while his wife and daughters wind the silk from the cocoons, ready for the weaver's hands.

He has no patterns; for every weaver is an artist, and makes his own designs.

Every *obi*, or sash, and every piece of silk has a different pattern; there are no two alike. The sashes are very beautiful, and very gay, and when tied in a great bow at the back, make the wearers look very much like great spotted butterflies.

Kine and Metzu wear such sashes, and their

mother buys some very pretty ones for them while they are in Kioto. Most of them are two feet wide, and those for grown-up people are over ten feet long.

Besides the beautiful patterns woven in the silk, they are often embroidered with gold and silver threads.

Kioto was once the capital of Japan, and the home of the Mikado, or emperor. It was then called the City of Pleasure.

There are a great many temples in Kioto, some of them being built far up the sides of the mountains. Kioto, itself, is built upon a beautiful plain, with mountains all around it.

Priests and pilgrims can be seen everywhere, and the children put a rice cake in the hands of a blind pilgrim and ask for his blessing.

Very early in the morning every one is

awakened by the clanging of bells and the beating of gongs before the temples, to call the priests to morning prayers ; for these quiet little people are very earnest and sincere in their worship.



GREAT BELL, KIOTO

One day Metzu and his father went to see the great bell of Kioto, the finest in Japan, with beautiful carvings upon it.

Metzu thought it a wonderful bell, and told

Kine all about it when he returned to the hotel where they were staying.

“Such a strange hotel!” you would say if you could visit it. It stood upon a hillside, and the children could look away over the city to the mountains upon the other side, and, farther down the valley they could see the beautiful lake, Hikone, flashing and glittering like a great jewel in the morning sun.

When the children go into the hotel, they take off their shoes and give them to a servant, and the clerk gives them a check for them.

Inside the great hotel, all the partitions, or inside walls, are wooden frames covered with tissue paper; and if the children should move around in their sleep they might push their hands or feet through the wall into the next room. But a piece of paper and some rice starch will soon make the wall as good as new.

The Japanese children have a saying, “He that has not seen Nikko, must not use the word kekko.”



GREAT GATE, NIKKO

“Kekko” means beautiful, splendid, and Nikko, which means “sunny splendor,” is the name of a village in the center of Hondo. The

village of Nikko is indeed one of the most beautiful places in the world.

The Japanese are a beauty-loving people, even the tiniest cottage and poorest bamboo hut having its little flower garden and blossoming cherry tree.

Two roads lead to Nikko, and upon each of these roads, for more than thirty miles, are rows of great pine trees, making grand avenues of shade leading to the lovely village.

One day the children went for a sail upon beautiful Lake Hikone. They took their dinner with them, and had a grand time under the trees upon the bank of the lake.

In the evening, when they returned, their father asked them if they were too tired for a journey the next day.

"No, no," both answered, "we are never tired; if our mother is not tired, we will start early."

Their mother smiled, thinking she would be ready long before the children would awake, after such a day of pleasure and play as they had had; but as soon as the first rays of the morning sun touched the white caps of the western mountains, they were up and waiting for the maid to tie their sashes in great bows. Their simple breakfast of tea, rice and fish was soon eaten, and again riding in jinrikishas, they passed through one of the long avenues leading to Nikko.

How beautiful their island looked that bright morning. Snow-capped mountains, glittering cascades and waterfalls, blue lakes and rivers shining like threads of silver, were upon every side; and over their heads the boughs of the great pine trees made a beautiful canopy of green.

As they came in sight of the village, they

crossed a swift-rushing, roaring mountain stream. The bridge by which they crossed this river was a plain wooden one; but not far away was another bridge, resting upon solid columns of stone, and the wood-work covered with lacquer and bright with gold. This was the Rainbow Bridge; and these children would tell you that, in the days of old, the gods let this bridge down from the clouds, and the Emperor is the only one who can pass over it.

Several years ago, when General Grant was visiting Japan, the Emperor invited him to cross this bridge. But our brave, wise General, knowing that the Japanese thought this bridge sacred to their Emperor, politely declined the invitation, and passed over the plain wooden one. Was he not kind and thoughtful, to respect the feelings and belief of a strange people in this way?

Many, many years ago, two of the greatest shoguns, or governors, that Japan ever had, were buried in Nikko; and the finest temples of Japan were built here in honor of them.



THE SHOGUN'S BRIDGE, NIKKO

Splendid gateways, beautifully carved, stand before these temples; and the priest will show you upon one of the gates, a place where the carving is left unfinished. He will tell you the gods commanded that it be left undone, lest

mortals should make work as perfect as the gods could do.

After visiting the temples and a mountain shrine, where the children placed money in one



HIGURASHI GATE, NIKKO

of the boxes everywhere ready for those who wish to give, they started back down the beautiful Avenue of Pines, past the Rainbow Bridge once more, shining like a real rainbow in the

sunlight. Here they turned to look back at the beautiful village with its splendid temples and gateways. The gilded roofs, the red walls, brilliant with gold and lacquer, were just as bright, just as beautiful as when this strange little people built them more than two hundred years ago.

From Kioto to Tokio by railroad is about as far as from Boston to Philadelphia, and the children were glad to return home in this way. Kine wondered if her birds and her pretty spotted kitten had been cared for, and Metzu hoped the turtle in the little pond in their garden had not crawled away to deeper water.

Still, they were not too tired to look out of the windows at the many little villages through which they passed. Everywhere the people were busy cultivating the soil, or cutting down

the great bamboo canes, or carrying bundles of wood upon their backs.

In many towns crowds of people were gathered around jugglers or acrobats. The Japanese jugglers, or sleight-of-hand performers, do wonderful things.

Their magicians are among the best in the world; and in no other country will you see so many things done to amuse and please the children as in Japan.

The children have many Feast Days, and many a show and street parade is held just for the children. In the cities there are many theatres. When the people go they take all their children, too. Often the play lasts for two or three days, and the mother carries a basket of food, which is eaten in the theater.

Many of the plays are histories of Japan, or stories of olden days. They would seem very

tiresome to you, but the Japanese never tire of hearing about the early days of their Island Empire. They have many dancers, and most of them dress to represent some bird or beast.

The butterfly dance is a favorite with the children, and the dresses of the dancers are very gay and beautiful.

The children are very glad when the train reaches Tokio and they take the street car for home. These Island people are quick to learn the ways of other nations, and there is a street car line in Tokio now.

Back at home the children are very glad to play in their own garden again. Kine's kitten has grown larger, and the mischievous monkey is just as full of pranks as ever. The turtle has eaten up the gold fish in the pond, and Metzu thinks he has grown much larger. Kine

says he ought to be larger, having eaten all her pretty fish.

The children have grown wiser, if not larger. Their bright, black eyes have seen many strange sights, and they are quick to learn and can remember all they have seen and heard.

Metzu thinks the new island of Formosa must be finest of all, and often he will say to Kine, "When another summer comes, I shall ask our father to take me to Formosa." But Kine thinks her home island so beautiful that she has no wish to go away from it. Metzu tells her that she will never know what grand things there are in the world if she never leaves their island; but Kine only smiles and answers, "You may go, and then you can tell me all you have seen."

There is another large island, north of

Hondo, called Yesso. Upon this island lives a wild tribe of people.

They are the descendants of those who lived upon the islands before the Japanese came there.

These wild, savage people are called Ainos, and live by hunting and fishing. They build small huts upon posts driven into the ground; benches are built around the sides of the hut, and these serve for beds, chairs, and tables.

The women make a kind of cloth from the bark of trees, and this, with the skins of animals, makes their clothing. The women do all the hard work; the men hunt and fish.

On this island are great coal mines; and from the large city of Hakodate many dried fish are shipped to other countries.

Hundreds of years have passed since the first Emperor of Japan died, but until about fifty

years ago this beautiful Sunrise Kingdom was almost an unknown land to every other nation.

These people never went visiting, and they did not allow visitors to land upon their island. Some Dutch ships were permitted to anchor in one of their harbors, and the Japanese would go out to their ships in boats and trade with them.

Our nation tried, in many ways, to make a treaty with Japan, which would allow us to buy tea and camphor and coal of them; but they would have nothing to say to us.

However, in 1852, Commodore Matthew Perry (brother of the hero of Lake Erie) was sent, with a fleet of ships, to make a treaty with Japan.

After a great deal of talk with the Shoguns, he was allowed to land; and, in 1854, after waiting for a long time, a treaty was signed,

which allowed American ships to enter two of their harbors for coal, water, and food.

Again, in 1858, a new treaty was made, which gave the people of other nations the right to build houses and live in Yokohama.

At last, in 1868, the Emperor (the Tenno, or Heaven Child, as the Japanese call him), was to meet the foreigners. What a terrible thing this seemed to the Japanese people! Their Emperor, who had never been seen by any one, except his own family, to meet the strangers — the Tojins!

No wonder the Japanese felt sure their empire was ruined. But the rulers had said it must be; and one day the Tenno — the Heaven Child — walked upon the earth like common people, and met the ministers from foreign lands.

What a change has come to their land since

that time! Nearly three thousand miles of railroad, telegraph and telephone lines, street cars, electric lights, public schools, police and fire departments, all the improvements time has brought to civilized countries — these the Japanese have in their island empire.

Many of their old ways they still keep; but if they go on improving in the next twenty-five years, as rapidly as they have in the last, little Metzu will truly have good reason to think his land one of the grandest under the sun.

In November, when the Feast of Chrysanthemums comes, and every one goes to see the beautiful flowers, the Emperor and Empress of Japan invite their noblemen and the foreign ministers, together with their wives, to a chrysanthemum party.

The Empress often visits the schools, and



FIRE DEPARTMENT OF TOKIO

sometimes gives presents to the children with her own hands.

When the Feast of Chrysanthemums comes, all the people visit the parks and public gardens to admire the lovely flowers. Sometimes five or six different colors are grown upon one bush, for the Japanese are very skilful gardeners.

But the holiday which the children enjoy the most is the Feast of the Cherry Blossoms. Everywhere the beautiful trees grow; and they are cultivated just for the blossoms, for the cherries are not fit to eat.

What a merry time they have when, at last, the great white blossoms open under the warm spring sunshine! Old and young take their dinner baskets and picnic under the beautiful trees. The children sit upon the green grass, the birds singing in the branches and the white blossoms falling like snow around them.

The cuckoo calls in merry tones from the topmost branch and the lark flies up toward the blue sky, singing as he goes. No robin redbreast, however, calls out gayly, "Cheer up, cheer up," for he thinks, no doubt that a land where cherries are not good to eat is no place for him.

Here, under the trees come the jugglers, the fortune-tellers and the magicians, and everywhere there is something to amuse the children.

Metzu and Kine, found an old magician charming turtles, and they watched him for a long time.

Again, a storyteller comes under the trees where they are sitting and tells some of the wonderful stories of olden days.

Nearly every month has a flower festival.

The happiest holiday is the Feast of the New Year.

Every one then has new clothes. The men and boys go to the barbers and have their heads shaved, and the hairdresser comes to the house and combs the hair of the women and girls. Every one cleans house. The shops are gaily trimmed, new plays are acted at the theatres, and for a whole week every one rejoices.

But sorrow comes in Japan sometimes as well as joy and pleasure. There is no land without death, and the people of Japan love their friends, and grieve when they are taken from them just as we do. They visit the cemeteries and the tombs of their families, and carry flowers to place on their graves.

In every home there is a shrine where prayers are said every day; and each month the Priest comes to the house, and sitting on the floor, the whole family count their beads and chant their prayers.

There are several Christian churches and missions in Japan, and about three thousand Japanese are believers in Christianity. But the greater part of the people are Buddhists, or believers in the Shinto religion.

They do not wish their children taught any religion except their own; but let us hope little Metzu and Kine may learn to love the God of the Christians, and follow the teachings of Jesus, the children's gentle, loving Friend.

Now, when you see the cherry trees, in spring, filled with innumerable white bouquets, or when the chrysanthemums are in bloom in your windows in the autumn time, I would have you think of the gentle, soft-voiced, dark-eyed little Japanese children, in their strange country far away toward the setting sun.

I would have you imagine them sitting

METZU

under the blossoming cherry trees, or walking here and there through the gardens at the chrysanthemum show, or having a merry time playing together, just as all little children do in every land upon this great, round world; for children are children in whatever land they dwell, and the happiest days of life, the wide world over, are the days of childhood.

Then, little boys, swing your hats; little girls, clap your hands; and, while the boys and girls of Japan wave their fans and swing their paper umbrellas, let us join them in a glad "Hurrah! hurrah! Nippon Banzai! (nee-pon banzi) Long live Japan!"



VOCABULARY.

Buddha (bö'dä)
Confucius (kon-fū'shius)
Formosa (fôr-mō'sä)
Fuji-yama (fö'jē-yä'mä)
Hakodate (hä-kō-dä'tā)
Kioto (kē-ō'tō)
Kiusiu (kyō'syō')
Kobe (kō'be)
Nagasaki (nä-gä-sä'kē)
Okhotsk (o-chotsk')
Osaka (ō-sä'kā)
Shikoku (shē-kō'kö)
Toki (tō'kē-ō)
Yokohama (yō-kō-hä'mä)

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